

## **2 Steps To Ensure You Hire Right The First Time**

### **1) Write a Job Description (what the job entails)**

A job description is a living document, which should be updated as often as necessary. It lists the general tasks and responsibilities of a position, including the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed. The job description should give a clear indication of what work the employee does, initially to help fill an open position and later to support performance management and appraisal.

A good job description should include:

- Job title
- Main purpose(s) of the post
- Accountability (to whom the employee is responsible)
- Supervisory responsibility (workers who the person supervises or manages)
- Main responsibilities of the job, with a detailed breakdown if this is appropriate. Include only tasks that are genuinely part of the job
- When and how often tasks should be performed (if required)
- Starting date and duration, if the job is for a fixed period.
- Summary of the main conditions of employment, including salary range, increments, pension arrangements, hours of work, holiday, probationary period, arrangements for supervision and appraisals;
- Date on which job description was last updated and approved

When writing a job description, make sure there is no discriminatory language. It is also important to keep the job description flexible, dynamic, and current.

## 2) Writing a Person Specification (what person is required for the job)

Drawing up a person specification is one way of ensuring that you select employees on the basis of their relevant abilities, rather than on subjective or irrelevant criteria.

To draw up a good person specification it is vital to have a clear and accurate job description based on a task analysis (part 1). By knowing what the job involves, it is easier to assess the qualities needed to do it.

These requirements can be divided into:

- **Experience:** previous jobs, unpaid work experience, life experience.
- **Skills, knowledge and abilities:** Languages, drivers licence, knowledge of specialist fields (dairy, sugarcane, micro jet irrigation etc), ability to use equipment with some indication of the level of competence required, and whether the person must have the skills or knowledge beforehand or can learn them on the job (for example "basic knowledge of Microsoft Word, or willingness to learn")
- **Qualifications:** Certificates, degrees, diplomas (some jobs require specific qualifications, but most do not and it can be fairer to ask for the skills or knowledge represented by the qualification rather than asking for the qualification itself)
- **Personal attributes:** Such as strength, eyesight, personality, willingness to work in a hectic busy environment or on one's own.
- **Personal circumstances:** Such as being able to work weekends, evenings or to travel.

Each listed requirement must be justifiable in terms of the job description and task analysis. If it is not, it should not be part of the person specification. Where a requirement could be discriminatory against or in favour of a particular group (racial, ethnic, gender, disabled), particular care should be taken to ensure it is justified in terms of the job. For example, you should not specify a desire to employ a Chinese person but you can specify a requirement to speak fluent Mandarin. If you expect that a large number of suitably qualified people will apply for a job, it can be useful to include in the person specification not only the essential requirements but also desirable qualities.

When drawing up a person specification, you should be clear how each requirement would be assessed during the selection process. For example, this might be by:

- Taking up references and asking specifically about this requirement
- Asking candidates about it at interview
- Observing candidates' behavior, Eg: when looking around the farm or office.
- Giving candidates a task or test to assess their knowledge or ability. (This would only really work for very technical jobs)

***If a requirement cannot be assessed in some way, it should not be part of the person specification.***

**A D D I N G   V A L U E   T O   Y O U R   A G R I B U S I N E S S**

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